

Tamalpais Planning Area Bayfront Coalition
P.O. Box 1446
Mill Valley, CA 94942

March 2, 2007

Planning Commission
County of Marin Development Agency
3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 308
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

In regard to the Baylands Corridor discussion:

Unfortunately, Richardson Bay communities have been left out of the description of the Baylands Corridor with the exception of issue 4 on page 7 of the staff report which discusses modifications to the Bayfront Conservation Zone. Now, the Baylands Corridor begins at North San Pedro Road and continues to the north giving no consideration to Richardson Bay and the communities which surround the bay and previously were a part of the Bayfront Conservation Zone.

Several recent articles in the S.F. Chronicle have addressed rising sea levels. BCDC has addressed rising sea levels. The CWP has chosen to ignore this issue by stating; "The policies contained in the CWP Update and the analysis in the EIR are based on existing conditional recent projections on anticipated sea level rise which are unlikely to fully occur within the Countywide Plan horizon to 2030 which is the purview of this document". The paragraph does conclude with; "if the development is allowed at or near the existing shoreline on the remaining larger undeveloped parcels, the future shoreline could become a narrow band of emergent vegetation with severely compromised habitat values due to limited cover, diversity and size, and the proximity to human activity and disturbances. Much of the existing shoreline along Marin County has already been severely compromised, with just a narrow band of natural habitat remaining." In an article in the S.F. Chronicle dated 2/28/07 urging dramatic steps to curb climate change a scientific team from 11 countries concluded; "To minimize the hazards of rising sea levels and more powerful storms, the group called for a worldwide ban on coastal construction near existing high-tide lines. To reduce the effects of climate related disasters, such as floods or prolonged droughts, the panel urged better international emergency response measures, warning that there may be as many as 50 million environmental refugees by 2010." 2010 is within the time frame of the Marin Countywide Plan.

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Our existing Bayfront Conservation Zone seems to be conveniently removed by parcel rezoning. The entire staff presentation for March 5th, except for the above mentioned paragraph on page 7, omits Richardson Bay. Shoreline protection, limited development and access, tidelands preservation, restored marshlands, protected freshwater habitats, control of shoreline modification, and encouraged public acquisition of essential bay lands are all critical issues of the Baylands Corridor and are applicable to the Tamalpais Planning Area. The proposed rezoning includes many parcels that have been renamed from Bay Front Conservation to Neighborhood Commercial. This further removes policies of protection and enhancement of wetlands and bayshore properties.

We believe a refocus by the planning staff advising Planning Commissioners is needed as the Countywide Plan should include all Baylands Corridor parcels, large and small, and certainly including all properties around Richardson Bay to provide continuity between present habitat patches protection and future shoreline protection.

Sincerely,

Members of the Tamalpais Planning Area Bayfront Coalition

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Enc. Chronicle article dated 2/28/07